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ABSTRACT

This document recommends a view of principal leadership for Catholic schools in the Diocese of Parramatta (Australia). It recommends a shift in the culture of principal-professional development from a system-driven, input model to an individualized approach founded on collaborative, experience-based, critical reflection. A survey of the 74 principals in the diocese, conducted by the Principal Professional Development Task Force, elicited a 64 percent response rate. Findings indicate that the principals are experienced, highly qualified, and participate regularly in various kinds of professional development. It is suggested that the administration acknowledge the importance of experience in professional development, structure professional-development programs in longer blocks of time, and be sensitive to individual differences. Criteria for principal selection are also outlined. Sixteen tables and a copy of the survey are included. (LMI)

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Principal Professional Development

Task Force Report

Prepared by:
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November 4th, 1993

EA 025619

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Preface

The view of the leadership of the Principal in the Diocese of Parramatta is stated explicitly in two significant documents, both of which are currently in draft form. These are T*he Role of the Principal in Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Parramatta*, and *Criteria for Principal selection in the Diocese of Parramatta*. An extract from each captures the essence of this diocesan view.

The Principal inspires in the school community a vision of what it can become, and leads staff, students, parents and the broader community to a clearer understanding of the mission of the school and how it can be realised. Such Christian leadership relies on a management style which is collaborative, empowers others and results in decisions being made at the appropriate levels. The ultimate effect of such leadership has an impact on the quality of education provided for each child. (The Role of the Principal, page 4)

The role of the Principal in a Catholic School is to exercise leadership which is inspired by the Gospels and located in the mission of the Church. In the Diocese of Parramatta this leadership is identified in four areas - religious leadership, educational leadership, community leadership and administrative leaderhip. (Criteria for selection, page 1)

This report, based firmly on this view of the principalship, recommends a fundamental shift in the culture of principal professional development in this Diocese - a shift which recognises the experience and expertise of our principals by moving from what has been a system driven input model of provision towards an individualised approach based on collaborative, experience-based, critical reflection.

The Principal Professional Development Task Force was aware of the immensity of this shift as it made its recommendations, and appreciated that such a shift would take time and patience to carry through. However, in the light of the needs and practices of our current principals and the examples of best practice emerging around the world, it was convinced that the model which is recommended in this report is the best way to ensure that the Diocesan vision of the principalship continues to find expression in practice.

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Overview of Major Recommendations

1. That steps be taken to establish a new collaborative program with ACU addressing the needs of aspirants to the assistant principalship and principalship.

2. That the CEO require of all those newly appointed to the principalship that they participate in a process of induction to be negotiated with the Area Administrator and supported by access to a group of experienced Principals. This process will be appropriately resourced.

3. That submissions be called for from groups of principals keen to work together in peer support groups with a clear professional development agenda. Funds will be made available to support these groups.

4. That the establishment of an intensive program for experienced principals be explored with other Dioceses and/or the Australian Catholic University.

Section One

Introduction and Rationale

1.0 Background to the report

The Catholic Education Office, Diocese of Parramatta has been at the forefront of executive development activities since shortly after its formation as a Diocese, with the introduction of the innovative Executive Development Program in collaboration with the Australian Catholic University.

Over the last five years, some sixty participants have completed the program reporting a high degree of satisfaction. However, it has become apparent that by virtue of both the content and the structure of the EDP it was meeting the needs of aspirants to the principalship rather than those already in the role. The introduction of new appraisal procedures for principals and work on criteria for principal selection in 1993 sharpened the focus on the principalship, and highlighted the need to review the ways in which principal professional development might best be supported in this Diocese.

1.1 The Principal Professional Development Task Force

In order to carry out the task of review, the Principal Professional Development Task Force was established as a sub committee of the Executive/Staff Development Committee of the Diocese. The membership was based on expertise in aspects of professional development and school leadership. Task Force members were as follows:

- Dr. Michael Bezzina, Head of Division, Professional Development (Chair)
- Dr. Anne Benjamin, Director, School Administration.
- Br. Patrick Foley, Director, Religious Education and Educational Services
- Mr. Nicholas Vidot, Head of Division, Religious Education

- Dr. Charles Burford, Senior Lecturer in Educational Administration, Australian Catholic University
- Sr. Ailsa Mackinnon, Principal, Our Lady of Mercy College
- Mrs. Catherine Allabyrne, Principal, Quakers' Hill Parish School
- Mr. Greg Nethery, Primary Area Administrator
- Sr. Jan Barnett, Secondary Area Administrator

The terms of reference of the Task Force were as follows:

- To review current practice in principal professional development in the Diocese;
- To identify models of good practice;
- To identify the needs and preferences of principals;
- To identify system level expectations with regard to principal professional development;
- To make recommendations regarding the content and mode of delivery of principal professional development in the Diocese of Parramatta.

In the process of completing this report the task Force consulted widely. It sought feedback from the CEO Directors, the Religious Education, Curriculum and School Leadership Committees of the Diocesan Schools Board and from all Diocesan Principals, before seeking the endorsement of the Executive/Staff Development Committee of the CEO.

The purpose of this report is to provide for the reader an overview of the methods used by the Task Force, the information gathered by it and the recommendations made in the process of pursuing its terms of reference.

1.2 Overview of the report

Section Two of the report identifies some of the key sources identified in the review of the literature and of models of good practice, and draws from these principles and practices which were seen to be appropriate for this Diocese. A complete bibliography is attached to the report.

Section Three reports the findings of the survey of Principals' current practices in professional development and of their expressed needs.

Section Four comprises the criteria for the selection of principals. This is seen as an explicit statement of Diocesan expectations of principals.

Section Five details the framework for the support of principal professional development in the Diocese, and makes recommendations for theimplemenataion of the framework.

The Appendix includes a copy of the survey instrument.

Section Two

Literature Review

2.0 Some key elements of the literature

The purpose of this selection of quotations or comments is to highlight key aspects of current thinking concerning principal professional development.

- The literature suggests a broadening of the traditional inservice model by which principals were withdrawn from schools. Single-day inservice courses and short residential inservicing are still regarded as helpful, provided there is opportunity for processing and practising learned skills, and opportunities for feedback. (Laurie Brady, Gender as a Factor in the Professional Development of Principals, *Unicorn,* Volume 18, Number 1, Feb. 1992, p. 85).

- The answer to effecting change and institutional improvement is more likely to be found if our leadership formation programs assist our leaders to examine their attitudes towards helping people, assist them to learn more effectively from their experience on the job, and assist them to critically examine the meanings they attribute to these experiences. (Ross Keane, Transformative Leadership: A New Emphasis for Leadership Programs, *OVAD,* 1991, 4:4)

- Holliger and Wimpelberg (1989) outline *three* significant reasons for the failure of principal professional development programs: no proper follow-up (which might involve coaching, on-site technical assistance or support groups), lack of assessment of program effects, and the fact that the university model of delivery has increasingly been under fire in the eighties. (Michael Fullan, *The New Meaning of Educational Change :* London, Cassel, 1991).

- Professional growth is fostered in many ways, and practising principals have rich opportunities to increase their leadership effectiveness on *task* by learning more consciously and systematically from day-to-day experience. (Glyn France, Principals Learning and School Developing: Review of a Project of National Significance, *The Australian Administrator,* Vol. 7, No.5, October 1986, p.1)

- Problem-based learning is to be preferred because it integrates the content of a principal's role (e.g. legal issues, instructional supervision, staff development) with the management processes that lead to the development of the role (e.g. communication, problem-solving, decision-making.) (J. Murphy and J. Hollinger, The Principal ship in an Era of Transformation, *The Journal of Educational Administration,* Volume 30, 1992).

- New delivery systems for leadership education should be planned jointly by at least five primary key stakeholders: teachers, principals, district personnel, system administrators and accrediting institutions. (McLaughlin, 1991)

- Currently innovative inservice delivery models are being tried:

    - mentoring (Yamamoto, 1988)
    - contract coaching (Schon, 1983)
    - system-wide short-term programs (McLaughlin, 1990)
    - principals forums (Duignan and McPherson, 1992)

- Michael Fullan stresses over and over that inservice programs are of little value if they do not lead to change in the principal's work practice. There is a long way to go, especially in linking up leadership programs to follow-up and improvement on the job. (Fullan, 1991:338)

2.1 Models of Good Practice

- During the period in which the Working Party was doing its literature search a significant document was issued by the Commonwealth Department of Education and Training: *Leaders and their Learning: Professional Development Priorities for Principals,* May 1993. This document contains a very useful section called Examples of Good Professional Development Practice (pp 24-26). Below are eleven models which were cited:

    a. Developed and delivered by principals, employing authority and university.

    b. Developed by principals with support from employing authority.

    c. Developed by principals association, employing authority and university.

    d. Developed by employing authority and university, offered nationally.

    e. Members of cohorts study a coherent program developed by university.

f. Modules developed by university and employing authority and chosen by CEO's and principals for postgraduate aware.

g. Content decided by participants - a mix of principals and managers.

h. Developed by employing authorities in consultation with principals.

i. Colleague initiated.
(The Learning Exchange Action Program (LEAP) conducted by the South Australian Secondary Catholic Principals Associated and funded by the CEO was commented on by Task Force members as worthy of further study).

j. Provision of Study Support.

k. Induction Conferences.

2.2 Principles and Practices

Reflection by the members of the Task Force on the literature on principal professional development led to a statement of the following as principles to be manifest in any attempt to facilitate inservice delivery for principals.

- There is no single best approach to principal professional development
- Leadership within the Catholic School is:
  - based on gospel values
  - service based on a unique spirituality of leadership
  - shared
  - based in vision
  - prophetic
  - creative
  - rooted in awareness of system realities transformative rather than transactional
- Principal professional development:
  - actively supports the Diocesan view of Principal leadership
  - is a responsibility shared by the principal and the system with the Area Administrator playing a key role through the appraisal process
  - is built upon praxis and reflection
  - requires appropriate motivation
  - takes place largely in the context of the school
  - will be most successful in a collaborative learning culture
  - will require appropriate resources
  - is not always amenable to credentialling

Section Three

Results of the Principal Professional Development Survey

3.0 Purposes of the survey

The purposes of the Principal Professional Development Survey were:

- to provide an overview of principals' current practice in professional development;
- to provide an overview of their perceived needs in professional development; and
- to determine whether factors such as gender, type of school (primary or secondary), school size or lay/religious status were significant predictors of professional development needs or practices.

3.1 Methodology

In order to provide as broad a picture as possible of perceptions and practice it was decided to use a survey as a data gathering procedure.

The issues to be explored by the survey were identified by two sub groups of the Task Force on Principal Professional Development. These were discussed by the whole task force - two principals, an academic with expertise in educational administration, and six central office personnel with some role in the professional development of principals, four of whom had also been principals.

After three preliminary drafts, two principals (one primary, one secondary) who had not been part of the Task Force, were asked to complete the survey and provide feedback as to the need for changes and the time taken.

The final version of the instrument was distributed to all Principals in the diocese, with a covering letter from the Acting Executive Director of Schools assuring them of the confidentiality of responses and signalling the importance of their responses. The population of 74 principals can be described in terms of the factors

hypothesised as being significant predictors in professional development needs and practices. This is done in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Breakdown of population by factors hypothesised to be significant

		PRIMARY (n=50 [68%])	SECONDARY (n=24 [32%])
Lay (n=39 [53%])	Male	10 (14%)	8 (11%)
	Female	20 (28%)	1 (1%)
Religious (n=35 [47%])	Male	4 (5%)	10 (14%)
	Female	16 (22%)	5 (7%)

Male 43%, Female 57%

Principals were given ten days in which to respond. At the end of this time a fax was sent to all principals, thanking those who had already replied for their responses and encouraging others to return their surveys within three days.

Ultimately 46 responses were received, constituting a response rate of 62%. The factors used in Table 1 were applied to responses to determine the extent to which the responses can be considered to be representative of the population. This breakdown appears in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Breakdown of respondents by factors hypothesised to be significant

		PRIMARY (n=34 [74%])	SECONDARY (n=12 [26%])
Lay (n=26 [57%])	Male	7 (15%)	5 (11%)
	Female	14 (30%)	
Religious (n=20 [43%])	Male	3 (7%)	4 (9%)
	Female	10 (22%)	3 (7%)

Male 41%, Female 59%

A comparison of Table 1 and Table 2 reveals that the distribution of respondents by sub groups was sufficiently close to that of the total population to allow some confidence in extrapolating results to the whole population.

The average period of employment in education of respondents was 25.4 years (range 12-40), with 9.9 years in principalship (range 1-24), an average of 2.4 schools as principal (range 1-6) and an average tenure in the present school of 4.3 years (range 1-20).

3.2 Results

3.2.1 Qualifications and Tertiary Study

Qualifications held by respondents ranged from Teaching Certificates to Masters Degrees. 16 of the 46 respondents (35%) had been engaged in tertiary study in the period since the beginning of 1992. 28 had been engaged in some form of tertiary study in the last 5 years (61%), while only 6 (13%) had done no formal tertiary study in the last 10 years.

In terms of highest degrees held, 25 respondents held Masters degrees, 15 held Post Graduate Diplomas and six held undergraduate diplomas or degrees. The range in number of qualifications held was from 2 to 6, with a mean of 3.6. The areas of specialisation (where indicated) are summarised in Table 3 below:

Table 3: Principals' areas of specialisation

Area of Specialisation	Number of principals
Computers	2
Pastoral guidance/ministry	5
Educational Administration/Leadership	17
RE/Theology	18

Of the 160 qualifications identified, 69 (43%) were from the Australian Catholic University or its previous constituents.

3.2.2 Membership of associations

The breakdown of membership of professional associations is indicated in Table 4.

Table 4: Principal membership of associations

Association	*Number of members*
ITA	7
Australian College of Education	8
Subject Associations (All except 3 were PETA)	11
Other	11
Principals indicating no associations	12
Educational Administration Associations	19
National,State,Diocesan Principals' Associations	22

Clearly the most significant professional associations were those which related directly to the principalship or to educational administration more generally. Of the 12 principals who did not indicate that they belonged to any association, 8 were religious.

3.2.3 Participation in CEO professional development activities

Table 5 identifies the types of CEO inservices attended, and their relative frequency.

Table 5: Participation in CEO Professional Development

Inservice type	*Number*
OASIS	4
Conflict resolution	4
Supervision	4
Executive development	5
Pastoral skills for crisis management	6
Finance	6
Using the media	8
No CEO inservices indicated (All except 3 secondary)	8
School improvement	9
Building the leadership team	10
Subject specific (All except 1 primary)	15
Appraisal	16
Others	17
Curriculum leadership (Primary)	29

Thirty nine principals made responses with regard to the extent to which CEO inservice met their needs. Comments varied from "Excellent" and "Very good" to "Not greatly useful", with all except four indicating some degree of satisfaction. However, as will be seen later in the report conferences rather than CEO provided professional development activities seem to be the major form of inservice to which principals devote their time, with an average of 6.1 days spent at conferences in

the period under consideration. This could be translated into a figure of between 30 and 50 hours per person. By comparison, principals averaged 3.4 CEO inservices, with an average of 31 hours per person spent at these inservices.

3.2.4 Inservices provided by other agencies

The range of inservices attended which were not provided by the CEO was very wide. The overall pattern is reflected in Table 6.

Table 6: Participation in inservices not provided by the CEO

Inservice type	*Number*
Gifted and talented	2
Conflict resolution	2
Connolly Leadership course	3
Computers	4
RE/Spirituality	4
School development	5
Subject specific	10
General leadership	11
No specific activities identified	18
Other	19

If any pattern emerges from these figures it is to reflect a preference for activities related to general areas of leadership and administration (conflict resolution, Connolly, school development, leadership) rather than specific curriculum areas.

3.2.5 Conferences attended

As foreshadowed earlier, conference attendance is the single most significant professional development activity for principals in the sample in terms of the time devoted to it. However, conferences would compare more equitably with other forms of inservice if it were not for the Corporate Planning conference held in May, which was not intended as a professional development activity, but was considered to be one by 25 respondents. Given the level of membership in Principals' associations, the fact that the conferences of these associations figure strongly in principal professional development would be expected. Table 7 provides details.

Table 7: Frequency of attendance at conferences

Type of conference	*Number of times mentioned*
No conferences indicated	3
Other	18
Diocesan corporate plan	25
Principals' association (National, State or local)	39

3.2.6 Reading of journals

Participants were asked to name journals and indicate significant issues. While a wide range of journals and topics was represented, there were some significant trends. These are outlined below in Tables 8 and 9:

Table 8: Journal readership

Journal Title	*Number of times mentioned*
Word in Life	3
Education Australia	3
OVAD	3
Primary Education	4
Directions in Education	5
Journal of Educational Administration	5
Unicorn	5
Professional Reading Guide	5
No journals identified	6
PETA Publications	8
Directions	8
Catholic School Studies	13
The Practising Administrator	21
Others	27

Table 9: Significant issues in reading

Significant issues	*Number of times mentioned*
Approaches to learning	4
Current educational events	6
RE/Theology	6
Subject specific issues	7
Curriculum	14
Leadership/administration	23

From these figures it would appear that the most significant areas of reading are those most closely related to the work of the Principal - leadership and curriculum. The survey was limited by asking respondents to identify only journals rather than professional reading more broadly defined. This may have skewed the responses to this section of the questionnaire.

3.2.7 Other activities contributing to professional development.

Principals identified a range of activities which they considered contributed to their professional development. These ranged from structured retreats to the learning which comes from experience. These are itemised in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Other activities contributing to professional development

Type of activity	*Number of times mentioned*
Other's appraisal	3
Consultation with Area Administrator	3
Other activities mentioned only once	4
Reading other than journals	4
Sharing with other principals	4
Membership of appointment panel	4
Learning from experience	4
School improvement activities	4
Own appraisal	5
School based staff development days	8
Retreats or structured spirituality activities	12
Meetings or committee membership outside the school	14

It is clear from the above that principals value highly opportunities for learning through activities outside their own school (meetings, appraisals, selection panels), and that a significant number seek out spiritual activities for themselves. Interestingly 5 of the 20 religious in the sample made mention of this dimension of their development, while 7 of the 16 lay respondents did so. Lay principals have a higher proportional representation in this group, although one might expect that religious would have more access to opportunities of this type. The explanation could be that religious do not see this as a part of the "professional" dimension of their lives.

3.2.8 Valued forms of professional development

Respondents identified a wide range of activities as having been the most valuable for them, with only 7 being mentioned by more than one respondent. Significantly, given the level of participation in conferences, only one respondent identified a conference as most valuable to them. The other responses are listed below:

Table 11: Most valued professional development

Forms of professional development	*Number of times mentioned*
Participation in appraisal	3
Retreats or other forms of spiritual development	3
Connolly program	3
Building the leadership team	3
Interaction with peers	4
Conflict resolution	4
Appraisal workshops (R.Keane)	5

Four of these (appraisal and appraisal workshops, conflict resolution and building the leadership team) have been opportunities provided by the system.

3.2.9 Content of future programs

Responses to items 3.1 (regarding principals in general) and 3.2 (regarding the respondent in particular) have been reported side by side to provide information about perceived needs.

Table 12: Perceived needs for principals in general and for self

Significant issues	*Times mentioned (Principals)*	*Times mentioned (self)*	*Total*
Team roles	1	0	1
RE	1	2	3
Crisis management	2	1	3
Staff development	0	5	5
Stress management	3	2	5
Community relations	1	5	6
Time management	5	1	6
Computers and information technology	2	5	7
Pastoral care	4	3	7
Supervision	6	2	8
Spiritual development	6	2	8
Finance	7	2	9
Legal and industrial issues	6	4	10
Conflict resolution/interpersonal skills	6	6	12
General management/leadership issues	14	6	20
Curriculum issues and change	12	17	29

Issues related to change and curriculum were clearly seen as the greatest area of need, followed by the whole issue of leadership. Responses were included in this latter category where they were not specific in regard to the area of leadership in question. It might be assumed that the more specific areas identified by other respondents (conflict resolution, legal and industrial etc.) would form a part of the agenda for the general responses.

3.2.10 Methods of delivery of principal professional development

Principals suggested a wide range of approaches to "packaging" professional development. The strongest suggestions related to using extended withdrawal (anything from 2 days to a term) as opposed to (say) half day sessions, and to the use of weekends or vacation time.

Table 13: Suggested methods of delivery for principal professional development

Proposed method	*Number of times mentioned*
Breakfast meetings, industry placement, offer repeats at different times, a system like the EDP, a publication, use of office library, overnight stays.	1
Video	2
Overseas study	3
Work with school teams	3
Utilise peers	4
Extended withdrawal	7
Use vacation time/ weekends	8

3.2.11 Tertiary credit

In general response to the notion of tertiary credit was that it was a good idea in principle, but that it was not a major issue for most at present.

3.2.12 Some interesting differences between subgroups

This section of the report goes beyond the level of description to an analysis of differences between sub-groups using the dichotomies identified early in the report, namely male/female, lay/religious and primary/secondary. As well, some correlations were calculated using school size and years as a principal.

For differences between means, a t-test was used to determine significance. In the case of Primary/Secondary differences, the small size of the secondary group makes it difficult to obtain a statistically significant difference, so this should be kept in mind when considering differences. Moreover, the small overall sample size prevents an analysis which can take into account interaction between variable effects (eg, the combination of effects of being a female religious in a secondary school). Nonetheless, the results are quite informative, and the general trends can be just as useful for decision making as are single statistically significant results. Major comparisons are reported below. Statistically significant differences are in bold type.

Male/Female

Table 14: Average results for Male/Female comparison

Variables	*Male*	*Female*
Years as principal	3.6	4.8
Number of CEO inservices	2.9	3.7
Hours at CEO inservices	24.3	35.8
Number of non CEO inservices	1.3	2.4
Hours at non CEO inservices	7.7	28.8
Number of associations	2.4	1.6
Total number of inservices	6.0	7.0
Average length of inservice attended	6.7	11.1

While only two differences are statistically significant, there is an overall pattern which indicates that female principals attend more professional development activities than their male counterparts, and these tend to be longer in duration. The only aspect in which the female mean was lower than the male was the number of associations of which they were members. While this was not significant, it might reflect the tendency reported in other research for men to "network" more than women.

Lay/Religious:

Table 15 Average results for Lay/Religious comparison

Variables	*Lay*	*Religious*
Years as principal	8.1	12.1
Number of CEO inservices	3.9	2.7
Hours at CEO inservices	37	23.3
Number of non CEO inservices	2.5	1.4
Hours at non CEO inservices	23.6	16.4
Number of associations	2.2	1.5
Total number of inservices	6.3	4.0
Average length of inservice attended	9.0	10.7

Once again a clear pattern emerges, in which lay principals seem to attend more inservices, spend more time at them and belong to a greater number of associations. Two thirds of those who did not indicate any association membership were religious. Religious principals tended to be more experienced than their lay counterparts.

Primary/Secondary:

Table 16: Average results for Primary/Secondary comparison

Variables	*Primary*	*Secondary*
Years as principal	10.4	8.3
Number of CEO inservices	4	1.5
Hours at CEO inservices	37.4	10.9
Number of non CEO inservices	2	1.9
Hours at non CEO inservices	23.2	10.4
Number of associations	1.8	2.2
Total number of inservices	6.0 This difference verges on significance.	3.4
Average length of inservice attended	10.7	6.5

Examining the differences between Primary and Secondary principals yielded the greatest number of significant results. The overall pattern revealed greater experience, greater participation in all kinds of inservice and a tendency to participate in longer inservices on the part of primary principals.

As well as testing for differences, correlations were calculated for key variables. Significant and meaningful correlations were discovered between **school size and the number of qualifications held**, and between the **average length of inservice attended and the number of years of experience as a principal**. The meaning of the correlations was that principals of larger schools tended to hold fewer qualifications, and that principals with more experience were more likely to attend longer inservice activities.

3.3 Conclusions

The principals in the Parramatta Diocese are, by and large, an experienced and highly qualified group of educators and administrators. Their qualifications are current, and in general principals participate regularly in a variety of forms of professional development.

Some significant issues emerge from an examination of the more detailed results, however. The most commonly attended forms of professional development are conferences organised by the principals' associations (Table 7). This could well reflect the desire of principals to network in an environment in which they (or their colleagues) are in control of the agenda. It was curious, however, that these conferences did not appear in the list of "most valued professional development" (Table 11). In this list there appeared a number of activities which might be classified as "learning on the job" (participation in appraisal and interaction with peers) or interpersonal skills (appraisal workshops, conflict resolution, building the leadership team). These could indicate some

scope for structured opportunities for groups to be given a framework for reflection on practice.

A critical issue to date has been the "packaging" of programs. There was a degree of consensus in the responses to this survey (Table 13) that longer blocks are preferable to shorter ones. This would need to be balanced against models of good practice which indicate the benefits of opportunities for the application of skill and knowledge being dealt with in adult learning.

The differences between sub groups of principals (Section 3.12) provide substantial food for thought, with the long held anecdotal view of primary/secondary differences in participation in professional development being the most strongly supported by the results.

The system response to this data needs to recognise the major features outlined above. It needs to acknowedge the experience of principals. It needs to respond to the significance of professional experience as a means of professional development. It needs to find modes of delivery which respect the preference for extended time rather than fragmented time. Above all it needs to be sensitive to individual differences. In identifying and responding to these differences, the diocesan appraisal processes have a great deal to offer.

Section Four

Criteria for Principal Selection in the Diocese of Parramatta

The material in this section is the work of the School Leadership Committee of the Diocesan Schools Board, and was approved by the Board at its September meeting

4.0 Introduction

The role of the Principal in a Catholic School is to exercise leadership which is inspired by the Gospels and located in the mission of the Church. In the Diocese of Parramatta this leadership is identified in four areas - religious leadership; educational leadership; community leadership and administrative leadership.

Therefore the essential criteria for this position are:

4.1 Religious Leader

- commitment within the Catholic tradition to the Church's mission demonstrated by regular worship and integration of faith in daily living;
- ability to articulate a personal vision of the spiritual dimension of the school;
- a sound understanding of Church tradition, teaching and culture;
- experience in the teaching of Religious Education and knowledge of current trends in R.E. curriculum;
- experience in contributing to the development of a faith community which includes both adults and students;
- commitment to the integration and transmission of Gospel values through the curriculum.

4.2 Educational Leader

- a philosophy of education which is in accord with the Statement of Understanding and Vision for the Diocese of Parramatta;
- evidence of the ability to bring elements of such an educational philosophy to reality;
- knowledge of current trends in curriculum development and Board of Studies requirements;
- ability to motivate and develop others in the area of educational practice;
- ability to recognise and communicate educational achievements of a school;
- evidence of effective classroom teaching;
- four year professional qualification and post graduate degree/diploma;
- evidence of recent professional development;
- appointments to at least two educational leadership positions of which one has been a Catholic school.

4.3 Community Leader

- demonstrated commitment to a collaborative leadership in the creation of community;
- capacity to facilitate a co-operative relationship between parish and school;
- demonstrated skills in working with staff, students, pastors, parents and the broader community;
- ability to establish and maintain effective care of students and staff;
- commitment to providing a range of opportunities for parent involvement in the life of the school;
- ability to establish and maintain just and effective decision-making and communication structures.

4.4 Administrative Leader

- demonstrated skills in analysis, organisation, delegation and supervision;
- capacity to manage financial resources and plant/equipment;
- willingness to work within and to contribute to the Parramatta Diocesan school system;
- ability to develop and implement policy based on diocesan priorities and reflecting principles of justice;
- well-demonstrated skills in oral and written communication.

Section Five

Framework to facilitate Principal Professional Development in the Diocese of Parramatta

5.0 Introduction

Considering the principles and practices identified in the literature review, and the findings of the principal survey, the optimal framework for principal professional development would seem to characterised as flexible, sensitive to career stages, individualised, reflective and collaborative. Within this framework each principal carries the responsibility for his or her own professional development through exposure to current developments and taking opportunities to refine skills and understandings. The proposal below attempts to capture these characteristics.

5.1 Proposed program

This program addresses the professional development of principals at three stages: pre-appointment, induction and ongoing development (second contract and beyond). The appraisal processes for assistant principals and principals are seen as central to ensuring that leaders in the system are supported and advised in making choices among the opportunities available, and the role of the Area Administrator is central in this process. Given the level of experience and the relative lack of mobility of current principals, the issues of available career paths and the role of career planning among principals and assistant principals is worthy of serious consideration by the Office.

The activities proposed as appropriate for each stage of the principal's career could, of course, be utilised by principals at later stages if they so wished. It is assumed that professional development activities will continue to be provided for principals which are responses to emerging system and Board of Studies priorities.

5.1.1 Pre-appointment

The Diocese needs to continue to offer programs which allow aspirants to the assistant principalship and principalship to meet the basic criteria for appointment to these positions. Units of the type currently in the Executive Development Program have contributed significantly to the attainment of this purpose in the past, but have been limited in their impact because of the tightness of the EDP package - 6 units in two years.

The proposal is that negotiations be undertaken with the Australian Catholic University to offer a set of units on (say) a three year cycle as part of the system level professional development program. The units would be chosen on the basis of their ability to equip participants to meet selection criteria. These criteria appear in full as Section Four of this report, and are centred around capacities for religious leadership, educational leadership, community leadership and administrative leadership. The current units in the Executive Development Program are *Leadership and Ministry in the Catholic School, Instructional Leadership, Staff Development, Theory and Practice of Organisational Behaviour, Leadership in the Church Community and Pastoral Skills for Effective Leadership.* It is recommended that a review of these units be undertaken in the light of selection criteria and recent developments in graduate programs at ACU in order to determine the optimum program for the preparation of prospective principals.

These units could be taken for credit (or not) and would be offered using the successful model of the EDP scheduling, with most units utilising some release, some evenings and a residential weekend. It could be worth extending the limited use of vacation time currently in place also. The dynamic which establishes itself in these units facilitates the development of collaboration, reflection on practice and networking.

5.1.2 Induction

New principals may still be participating in course work as indicated above. However, it is appropriate to provide a structure which would encourage learning from experience. To this end it is recommended that newly appointed principals be required as a condition of appointment to work with one or more of the many highly experienced and qualified principals in the diocese in a peer support relationship for some time during the term of the first contract. The exact nature of this involvement would be negotiated with the Area Administrator. It could take forms such as mentoring, consultation visits by other principals, visits to other schools, participation in structured programs etc.

A volunteer group of experienced principals would be established to support beginning principals. They would provide the pool of expertise on which beginning principals could draw, could have some input into the existing orientation program, and might organise other appropriate experiences for particular new principals. They would be able to negotiate appropriate resourcing for their activities with the CEO, and would be supported by personnel from the Office as appropriate.

This proposal has the benefit of enhancing the professional development of the experienced principals involved as well as the new principals.

5.1.3 Ongoing Development of Experienced Principals

Experienced principals would have access to the basic courses and to opportunities to act in support of beginning principals if they wished. However, for principals in their second contract and beyond it is proposed to provide support for a scheme which would encourage the formation of self directed learning groups. This support would take the form of availability of system personnel and access to funds on

a submission basis. It is recommended that a budget allocation of $10,000 be made to support such groups, with submissions to be approved by a committee established by the Director, RE and Educational Services, and comprising both principals and office personnel. Fundamental to the success of this initiative will be the support provided by the CEO, particularly in the early stages of group formation.

It is envisaged that the groups would be self-forming. Members would then determine their own professional development agenda, and set about identifying the best ways to meet these needs. Groups would be encouraged to meet outside school time, with funding available primarily for facilitators, consultants, materials and venue rental. Groups would be required to report on progress periodically as a means of determining the success of the scheme. It may be that some members of such groups could be working towards credit in graduate programs at ACU.

The existing Professional Experience Program (PEP) should continue to operate, with provision for leave and financial support for approved programs. This provides experienced principals with opportunities for personal and professional renewal.

For principals eligible for PEP at the moment there are no substantial Australian programs which can be completed in the term available. Our own numbers, and those of any Diocese in NSW are too small to justify the establishment of a Diocesan program. It is recommended that the CEO pursue negotiations which would lead to the establishment of an intensive program for experienced principals, delivered by the best personnel in Australia and overseas. The program would be required to address the principles identified earlier in this document. This program could be established in a number of ways - under the auspices of Directors, of the CEC or through negotiations with ACU. As the

program is likely to attract a national clientele, the ACU option has much to recommend it as the first avenue to be explored.

5.1.4 All Principals

Regardless of the experience of principals, there are some forms of professional development which should continue to be available. These include relevant updates on current issues, development activities for whole school executive teams, opportunities for involvement in committees, conferences and appointment panels within and beyond the Diocese and the use of forms of study support which are open to all Diocesan personnel

Some consideration needs to be given to utilising existing mechanisms for keeping principals abreast of developments - cluster meetings, and principal initiated and Office initiated diocesan meetings. These have a professional development potential which has not been fully explored.

Current professional development activities which engage the whole school executive reflect a priority on shared leadership and are highly valued. Some of these are run at system level (Building the leadership team, Supervision for improved classroom practice, Instructional Leadership), and others are run at school level using a variety of resources.

It would be beneficial for the Office to consider ways in which opportunities for participation in the range of working parties, task forces, committees, conferences and appointment panels can be shared among the assistant principal and principal cohorts. Once established, procedures to facilitate this should be published. It was clear from the survey that such opportunities are highly valued.

There are already in place a number of mechanisms to support study in the Diocese. These include financial support and short term study leave. Some priority ought to be given in allocation of these funds to Principals and Assistant Principals in applications which reflect Diocesan priorities in leadership development.

5.2 Budget Implications

The proposals outlined in this document, with the exception of the intensive program for principals, have minimal impact on existing budget.

Pre appointment activities would require the allocation of (say) one release day per person per unit with financial support either from the system or the school for residentials (approximately $150 each). Presenter costs would be met either through HECS (where participants are enrolled at ACU) or by payments comparable with existing professional development charges. Applicants could be given priority for HECS exemptions.

Total system cost in a year might be in the vicinity of **$15,000**

Induction: Induction activities would have costs related to the operations of the support group. These could include some form of release to facilitate the absence of principals from schools or fees for facilitators or presenters. A ceiling of **$2,000** could be placed on this.

Ongoing Development: An amount of **$10,000** would be set aside for allocation to peer support groups on submission.
The costs of the intensive experienced principal program would be considerable, but these costs would be shared across the State. They would also depend on the procedure adopted for establishment. Costs to the Diocese would fall into two categories: establishment costs, and fees for participation of individual participants. It could be that, if properly mounted, such a program could attract national and international participants and might even generate revenue.

5.3 Summary of recommendations regarding new practices

1. Establish a new collaborative program with ACU addressing the needs of aspirants to the assistant principalship and principalship, and those of newly appointed principals where necessary. That $15,000 be set aside to resource this initiative.

2. Require of all those newly appointed to the principalship that they participate in a process of induction to be negotiated with the Area Administrator and supported by access to a group of experienced Principals. That a total of $2000 be allocated to support the work of this group.

3. That submissions be called for from groups of principals keen to work together in peer support groups with a clear professional development agenda. That a total of $10,000 be allocated to support such groups.

4. That the establishment of an intensive program for experienced principals be explored with other Dioceses and/or the Australian Catholic University.

Appendix

Principal Professional Development Survey

Section One: Principal Background and Experience

1.01. For how many years have you worked in education? .....

1.02. For how many years have you been a principal? .....

1.03. In how many schools have you been a principal? .....

1.04. For how many years have you been principal in your present school? .....

1.05. Are you: Lay ❑ or Religious? ❑

1.06. Are you: Male ❑ or Female? ❑

1.07. Please list your academic qualifications below and indicate the year in which each was completed:

Qualification	Year completed	Institution	Qualification	Year completed	Institution

1.08 To which professional associations do you belong?

1.09. In what type of school do you work?: Primary ❑ Secondary ❑

1.10. How many pupils are in your school? .....

Section Two: Participation in professional development

2.1 Inservice provided by the CEO since the start of 1992

Number of inservices attended	Topics covered by these inservices	Approximate time spent at these inservices

To what extent has the overall provision of professional development opportunities by the CEO met your needs as a principal?

2.2 Inservices provided by other agencies since the start of 1992

(This does not refer to more broadly based activities like conferences which are treated separately.)

Number of inservices attended	Topics covered by these inservices	Aproximate time spent at these inservices

2.3 Tertiary Studies engaged in since the start of 1992.

Number of units begun	University and Degree enrolled for	Approximate time spent attending courses

2.4 Conferences attended since the start of 1992

Number of conferences attended	Topics covered by these conferences	Total time spent at these conferences

2.5 Professional reading since the start of 1992.

Journals used	Most significant issues covered by this reading

2.6 There may be activities other than those mentioned so far which you consider have contributed to your professional, personal or spiritual development. If so, please describe these below and indicate the approximate time you have devoted to each activity **since the start of 1992**.

2.7 Of all the forms of professional development in which you have engaged since the start of 1992 (formal or informal), which has been the most valuable to you and why? Feel free to comment on the process, the organisation, the presenter and/or content.

Section Three: Needs and Preferences:

3.1 In the context of the demands of the principalship, are there any specific areas in which the CEO ought to make available opportunities for professional development to all principals as a matter of course?

3.2 What are the areas in which you will need professional development in order to meet the challenges of the principalship over the next 3 to 5 years?

3.3 CEO professional development activities are mounted in a range of ways and at different times. Can you envisage creative ways of "packaging" professional development opportunities which would best suit the special circumstances of principals?

3.4 To what extent is the availability of tertiary credit a significant factor in your decisions about participation in professional development for principals?

Section Four: Other Comments

4.1 If you wish to make any observations about how the CEO might better facilitate your professional development, please do so below.

Thank you for your time in completing this survey. Please return it ***by June 15th*** to:

Dr. Mick Bezzina,
Head of Division, Professional Development,
Catholic Education Office,
12 Victoria Rd.,
Parramatta, NSW, 2150